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Knott pamphlets

Fresh Intelligence

FROM THE

COFFEE-HOUSE.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

FRESH INTELLIGENCE

FROM THE

COFFEE-HOUSE.

'OTHER night I fept into the Coffee-houſe, and again meeting my political Friend, we adjourned to a room, and renewing our former Subject, he ſaid he could not [illegible] at the ſimplicity of the Gentlemen who thought that Conveener B—d—e was [illegible] as they obſerved, ſo much mention was made of J—n L—l—y always under the Denomination of CONVEENER. This exercis'd my curioſity to learn ſomewhat more of Mr L—l—y. Why, ſays my Friend, you muſt know there are two Incorporations, called Skinners and Furriers, and pray, ſaid I, Where do they reſide, for I never heard of any ſuch Trades in Edinburgh?

I am not at all ſurpriſed, ſaid he, at your queſtion: Theſe two Societies are compoſed of Bucks, as make and ſell Leather Gloves and Breeches, in thoſe adjoining to the Canelrigs and a few Skinners [illegible] the neighbourhood of the City, and prepare the Leather, it ſeems J—n L—l—y is the principal and by furniſhing Leather to the Glovers and Breeches makers, has them all very much under his command.

But is it poſſible (ſaid one) to prelude in two Societies?

THE Truth is, Theſe two nominal Incorporations are in fact but one Society; for any one of their members may be Deacon of either: Yet tho' they are all promiſcuouſly named Skinners and Furriers, and meet in one Hall, they are conſidered as two Incorporations, and conſequently entitled to have two repreſentatives in Council.

BRITISH MUSEUM

FRESH INTELLIGENCE
FROM THE
COFFEE-HOUSE.

T'OTHER night I ſtept into the Coffee-houſe, and again meeting my political Friend, we adjourned to a room, and renewing our former Subject, he ſaid he could not but laugh at the ſimplicity of the Gentlemen who thought that Conveener B—d—e was actually graſed, becauſe, as they obſerved, ſo much mention was made of J—n L—ſ—y always under the Denomination of CONVEENER. This excited my curioſity to learn ſomewhat more of Mr L---ſ---y. Why, ſays my friend, you muſt know that he is head or Leader of two Incorporations, called Skinners and Furriers, and pray, ſaid I, Where do they reſide, for I never heard of any ſuch Trades in Edinburgh?

I AM not at all ſurpriſed at your Queſtion: Theſe two Societies are compoſed of ſuch as make and ſell Leather Gloves and Breeches, in thoſe little ſhops adjoining to the Churches, and of a few Skinners who live in the neighbourhood of the City, and prepare the Leather for their uſe. Of the latter, it ſeems J—n L—ſ—y is the principal; and by furniſhing Leather to the Glovers and Breeches-makers, has them all very much under his command.

BUT is it poſſible for *one* man to preſide in *two* Societies?

THE Truth is, Theſe two *nominal* Incorporations are in fact but one Society; for any one of their members may be Deacon of either: Yet tho' they are all promiſcuouſly named Skinners and Furriers, and meet in one hall, they are conſidered as two Incorporations, and conſequently entitled to have two repreſentatives in Council.

THAT

THAT is really ſtrange! Theſe Incorporations ſurely cannot conſiſt of many, compared to the numerous Inhabitants of Edinburgh; and will they, from their ſmall number, find Twelve *reſpectable and independent* men, out of whom to elect Two Deacons? Are they not thereby poſſeſſed of about a *Sixteenth Share* of the Adminiſtration of the CITY?

CERTAINLY, Sir, and yet they would have *more*, altho' they already have ſo very much beyond their proportion; for inſtead of twelve reſpectable and independent men, as you naturally ſuppoſe they ought to have, I doubt if they can produce above three. However, Mr L—ſ—y is never at a loſs to make up *his* Leets with a dozen of ſuch as, from their *dependence* on him, muſt oppoſe every meaſure of Council, and are therefore, with the *uſual propriety* ſtiled, *independent patriots* by their faction.

AND pray, What can be L—ſ—y's motive for ſuch uniform and violent oppoſition to Council?

SEVERAL reaſons may be aſſigned, partly from natural diſpoſition and partly from accidental circumſtances. To give you ſome idea of both, about fifteen years ago, ſome of the inhabitants of Edinburgh were diſappointed in the call of a popular Miniſter, and though Mr L—ſ—y had no concern in the matter, as he did not ſo much as reſide in town, yet, from his natural reſtleſſneſs, he became very active in the oppoſition, and ſo, by the convulſion of the times, got himſelf *puſhed* into Council. Moſt opportunely for the malcontents, L—ſ—y was juſt ſuch a man as they wanted. Few men of *feeling* and *candour*, however zealous they may be for a party, are fond of accepting a *graſed* chair. Mr L—ſ—y, however, gloried in taking the *Gold-chain* from the then Conveener, and is ſtill ſo vain of the *high dignity* thus unexpectedly and *ungeneroufly* obtained, that, inſtead of endeavouring to bury the tranſaction in oblivion, after party rage had ſubſided, as might have been expected of ſuch a *profeſſor* of religion, he ſtill makes a pompous parade of the TITLE in his MANIFESTOES, even to the *eclipſing* of the

" *worthy*

"worthy and *respectable* citizen." Convener B--d--e himself. This hurdh measure, you may be sure, could not recommend him to the majority of the Council. You will not therefore be surprised that they did not give him a Gown. Two years he passed by the name of the *Naked Convener*. A greater indignity it seems could not be put upon him. This will sufficiently account for that gentleman and *his representatives* in Council joining every discontented faction in Edinburgh ever since. The deacons of the Skinners and Furriers you know appeared *flaming Patriots* at last General Election, even when P——t S--d--t himself, the ARCH-PATRIOT of the present times acted as a *friend* of Sir L—— D——.

BUT what society is this called Mary's Chapel?

THEY are the united Incorporations of Wrights and Masons. Mary's Chapel is the Hall where they conveen. All Slaters, Glaziers, Plumbers, Painters, Coopers, &c. are incorporated with one or other of them. *They* also have two deacons, and because of many lucrative jobs obtained by their representatives while in Council, much contention often arises among them, who shall get *in*; and they who cannot get into Council, you may be sure, envy those who do. This makes the majority assiduous to render their deacons obnoxious to the Council, by *binding* them down as much as they can, to thwart every measure proposed therein, that the City's employments may be more generally shared among them; and I can assure you, it is chiefly for these reasons that there are more turbulent spirits among *them* than any of the other Incorporations; for

"Take away the *loaves* and *fishes*,
"They'll never quarrel for *empty dishes*."

Are not the Hammermen as numerous and as turbulent as they? They are by far the most numerous Incorporation in the City, comprehending a vast variety of Trades, who assemble in another old Popish church, called Magdalen Chapel.

They

They are much of the ſame ſpirit with their brethren of St Mary's, and for the ſame *public ſpirited* cauſes too. Yet although they conſiſt of about double the number of Mary's Chapel, and perhaps eight or nine times as many as the *two* Incorporations of Skinners and Furriers, they have only *one* Deacon. Why, truly I think, if that be the caſe, the Trades have ſome reaſon to inſiſt upon an alteration of the ſett. The want of an equal repreſentation in Council, I ſuppoſe is one of their principal grievances.

You never was more out in your life, Sir. Do you think Conveener L——ſ——y, or the patriots of Mary's Chapel, are ſuch fools, as to quit one inch of the power or influence that the preſent ſett gives them, No, no, they know better things. All they want, is, to alter thoſe parts of the ſett which ſtand in the way of their inſatiable ambition. What is in *their* favour they will find no fault with, take my word for it.

What ſort of people are the Bakers?

They are a pretty numerous Incorporation, and have a conſiderable number of decent reſpectable members. Not having the ſame bone of contention as the members of the Chapels, they obſerve more decorum; and I hear have reſented, with becoming ſpirit, the abuſe thrown on their Repreſentative by the Congreſs.

Are not the Surgeons one of your Incorporations too? Their ſuperior education will ſurely preſerve them from thoſe indiſcretions, that diſgrace men who have not the ſame advantage.

None of theſe gentlemen, I ſuppoſe, will engage in City Politics?

You are quite miſtaken my friend; they have not eſcaped the *infection*; ſome of them are as madly zealous for what they call the *cauſe of Liberty*, as any *Mulciber* in Magdalen's Chapel.

Is it poſſible that any of theſe gentlemen can *demean* themſelves, or their Society, ſo far, as to become the *dupes* of a man who affronted their whole body, by *graſing* their Repreſentative when Conveener?

Why,

Why, truly, Sir, they have not only as a body expreſſed their approbation of L—f—y's plan, by deputing three of their members as Delegates to *his* Congreſs, but one of them has acted a principal part in all our late political riots and mobs. When I think on the reſpectable family this young gentleman belongs to, I bluſh for his behaviour; but his youth muſt plead his excuſe.

You have now ſatisfied me with regard to ſeven of your Incorporations; but are there not ſeveral others?

Yes, there are the Shoemakers, Weavers, Goldſmiths, Taylors, Fleſhers, Waulkers and Bonnetmakers. The two laſt are made up of the Dyers, and a few Hatmakers; and neither they nor the Taylors, nor Shoemakers, can, with reaſon, complain of not having ſufficient Weight in the City, ſeeing the numbers of all theſe Incorporations are very trifling. The Bonnetmakers, however, have ſhown as much of the *genuine* ſpirit of independency as any Trade in the City, by expreſſing their diſapprobation of thoſe paſſages in the Minute of the Congreſs, which no man of ſenſe, uninfluenced by party ſpirit, could approve of. Their diſintereſted and unanimous diſapprobation of the perſonalities it contained, affords a ſtriking contraſt to the conduct of the Goldſmiths, who moſt *inconſiſtently* approved of a Minute, reflecting in a manner equally unjuſt and illiberal upon the very Man, whom but three years before, they had complimented with their FREEDOM. As for the Weavers, they have to be ſure a *very reſpectable Gentleman* at their head. Their Repreſentative in Council, Sir, has the honour to be Servant of a Gentleman, who, during Conveener L—f—y's firſt patriotic ſtruggles, cut a capital figure under the denomination of CLODPOLE *the* PAINTER. Theſe *Liberty-Men* talk much of *independency*; but with what *propriety* you may judge. The Incorporation of Goldſmiths, though the ſecond in rank, cannot boaſt a long Liſt of Members above mediocrity, the reſt are moſtly either ſervants or *dependents* of the few

more

more wealthy. Where then ſhall we find this *boaſted* indepency. Were it not for that power of ſhortening the Leets, lodged in the Council by the Set of the city, the few opulent members in each ſociety would openly lord it over the reſt.

YOUR obſervation is juſt; and as *wiſdom*, *candour* and *honeſty* are not always the attendants of *wealth*, it is but reaſonable, that the more worthy, though perhaps *poorer* tradeſmen, ſhould alſo enjoy *their* ſhare in the adminiſtration. I ſee then that the rich, under the pretence of *Liberty* to the *Trades* are only ſeeking greater *power* to *themſelves*.

INDEED it is ſomewhat ſurpriſing that the inferior members of the incorporations ſhould not ſee through the maſk; but the bait of Liberty is always alluring (for all mankind love to be free) although in ſeeking an enlargement of Liberty, they are often involved in more *abject* Slavery. The Sett of the City was laſt framed by that able Stateſman Lord Iſlay; an equal diſtribution of power is diffuſed by it through the whole community, to maintain peace, and prevent, as far as poſſible, the many abuſes that would otherwiſe enſue. The evils attending Poll-elections are well known in this country, and ſtill more in England; the bare mention of them is ſufficient to make any citizen of Edinburgh, who is a man of common ſenſe, thankful for the happy conſtitution under which he lives. Agreeable to this conſtitution, the old Merchant Council and Trades Council, in conjunction, have, by the ſhortening of the Leets, *ſome* ſhare of the election of the new Trades Council, who, in return, have, together with the old Merchant Council, an *unreſtricted* power in the election of the new Merchant Council, in which even their *extraordinary* Deacons have an equal Vote with the Lord Provoſt; and this balance of power in the City, may, in ſome degree, be compared to that excellent political balance, which deſervedly renders the conſtitution of the BRITISH EMPIRE the admiration of the world.

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